

# **HOUSE BUDGET REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE ON JUSTICE, PUBLIC SAFETY, & JUDICIARY (H)**

## **Minutes of the 1st Meeting of the 2026 Regular Session**

**January 13, 2026**

### **Call to Order and Roll Call**

The first meeting of the House Budget Review Subcommittee on Justice, Public Safety, and Judiciary of the House Standing Committee on Appropriations and Revenue was held on January 13, 2026, at 10:00 AM in Room 169 of the Capitol Annex. Representative Stephanie Dietz, Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll.

### **Present were:**

Members: Representative Stephanie Dietz, Chair; Representatives Nima Kulkarni, and Scott Sharp.

Guests: Zach Ramsey, Director, Administrative Office of the Courts(AOC); Carole Henderson, Budget Director, AOC; Captain Chris Baker, Driver Testing Branch, Kentucky State Police(KSP) and Major Emily Horton, Commercial Vehicle Enforcement, KSP.

LRC Staff: Zachary Ireland, Perry Papka, Spring Emerson, Taylor Bishop, and Jim Thornton

### **Kentucky Court of Justice**

Directors Ramsey and Henderson, AOC, gave an update on the budgetary pressures of legally mandated services in the areas of contractor rates for language interpreters, costs for random drug testing, paper record storage issues in Jefferson County, and the need for available space for court activities in Boyle County due to serious structural issues in the Boyle County court house.

In response to Chair Dietz, Director Ramsey stated that the two percent increase will be for contractor pay raises to help achieve parity against neighboring states.

In response to Representative Kulkarni, Director Ramsey stated that there are efforts to expand local services and that contractor certification can be state as well as national.

In response to Representative Sharp, Director Ramsey noted that AI technology is being considered but it has to be in a court context.

In response to Chair Dietz, Director Ramsey indicated that the department will forward information on how many cases are continued due to a lack of interpreters.

In response to Representative Kulkarni, Director Ramsey stated data security is a serious issue and most responsibility defers to the vendors managing cloud storage.

In response to Chair Dietz, Director Ramsey said there is an ongoing examination of how to best solve the issue of paper file storage for Jefferson County and that the information on how many years are affected will be sent to the Subcommittee.

In response to Chair Dietz, Director Ramsey noted the cabinet is developing a plan for necessary alternative court space due to structural issues in the Boyle County courthouse.

### **Kentucky State Police**

Captain Chris Baker and Major Emily Horton, KSP, stated the need for three additional driver testing offices in current KYTC offices to allow better service for the Commonwealth. Captain Baker stated that the most acute need is in Louisville.

In response to Chair Dietz, Captain Baker stated that the department had not completely eliminated the backlog of testing caused by the addition of 15 year-olds to the system.

### **Adjournment**

The next meeting is scheduled for January 20, 2026. There being no further business before the subcommittee, the meeting was adjourned at 10:46 AM.